

TO GOSSIP IS A SIN.

Dr. Talmage Denounces the Practice of Whispering of Evil.

Classes It Among the World's Greatest Villainies—More Harmful Than Open Slander—A Destroyer of Good Names.

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In this discourse Dr. Talmage vigorously arraigns one of the great evils that have cursed the world and urges generous interpretation of the characters of others; text, Romans 1:29, "Full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity—whisperers."

Paul was here calling the long roll of the world's villainy, and he puts in the midst of this roll those persons known in all cities and communities and places as whisperers. They are so called because they generally speak under voice and in a confidential way, their hand to the side of their mouth acting as a funnel to keep the precious information from wandering into the wrong ear. They speak softly not because they have lack of lung force or because they are overpowered with the spirit of gentleness, but because they want to escape the consequences of defamation. If no one hears but the person whispered unto, and the offender be arraigned, he can deny the whole thing, for whisperers are always first-class liars!

Some people whisper because they are hoarse from a cold or because they wish to convey some useful information without disturbing others, but the creatures photographed by the apostle in my text give muffled utterance from sinister and depraved motive, and sometimes you can only hear the sibilant sound as the letter "s" drops from the tongue into the listening ear, the brief hiss of the serpent as it projects its venom.

Whisperers are masculine and feminine, with a tendency to majority on the side of those who are called "the lords of creation." Whisperers are heard at every window of bank cashier and are heard in all countingrooms as well as in sewing societies and at meetings of asylum directors and managers. They are the worst foes of society, responsible for miseries innumerable; they are the scavengers of the world, driving their cart through every community, and to-day I hold up for your holy anathema and execration these whisperers.

From the frequency with which Paul speaks of them under different titles I conclude that he must have suffered somewhat from them. His personal presence was very defective, and that made him perhaps the target of their ridicule, and besides that he was a bachelor, persisting in his celibacy down into the sixties—indeed, all the way through—and, some having failed in their carnal designs upon him, the little missionary was put under the raking fire of these whisperers. He was no doubt a rare morsel for their scandalizing, and he cannot keep his patience any longer, and he lays hold of these miscreants of the tongue and gives them a very hard setting down in my text among the scoundrelly and the murderous. "Envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity—whisperers."

The law of libel makes quick and stout grip of open slander. If I should in a plain way, calling you by name, charge you with fraud or theft or murder or uncleanness, to-morrow morning I might have peremptory documents served on me, and I would have to pay in dollars and cents for the damage I had done your character. But these creatures spoken of in my text are so small that they escape the fine tooth comb of the law. They go on, and they go on, escaping the judges and the juries and the penitentiaries. The district attorney cannot find them, the sheriff cannot find them, the grand jury cannot find them. Shut them off from one route of perjury, and they start on another. You cannot by the force of moral sentiment persuade them to desist. You might as well read the Ten Commandments to a flock of crows, expecting them to retreat under the force of moral sentiment. They are to be found everywhere, these whisperers. I think their paradise is a country village of about 1,000 or 2,000 people where everybody knows everybody, but they also are to be found in large quantities in all our cities.

They have a prying disposition. They look into the basement windows at the tables of their neighbors and can tell just what they have morning and night to eat. They can see as far through a keyhole as other people can see with a door wide open. They can hear conversation on the opposite side of the room. Indeed, the world to them is a whispering gallery. They always put the worst construction on everything.

Some morning a wife descends into the street, her eyes damp with tears, and that is a stimulus to the tattler and is enough to set up a business for three or four weeks. "I guess that husband and wife don't live happily together. I wonder if he hasn't been abusing her? It's outrageous! He ought to be disciplined. He ought to be brought up before the church. I'll go right over to my neighbor's and I'll let them know about this matter." She rushes in all out of breath to a neighbor's house and says: "Oh, Mrs. Allen, have you heard the dreadful news? Why, our neighbor, poor thing, came down off the steps in a flood of tears. That brute of a husband has been abusing her. Well, it's just as I expected. I saw him the other afternoon very smiling and very gracious to some one who smiles back, and I thought I then I would just go up to him and tell him he had better go home and look after his wife and family, who probably at that very time were upstairs crying their eyes out. Oh, Mrs. Allen, do have your husband go over and put an end to this

trouble! It's simply outrageous that our neighborhood should be disturbed in this way! It's awful!"

The fact is that one man or woman set on fire of this hellish spirit will keep a whole neighborhood a-boil. It does not require any very great brain. The chief requisition is that the woman have a small family or no family at all, because if she has a large family then she would have to stay at home and look after them. It is very important that she be single or have no children at all, and then she can attend to all the secrets of the neighborhood all the time. A woman with a large family makes a very poor whisperer.

It is astonishing how these whisperers gather up everything. They know everything that happens. There are telephone and telegraph wires reaching from their ears to all the houses in the neighborhood. They have no taste for healthy news, but for the scraps and peelings thrown out of the scullery into the back yard they have great avidity. On the day when there is a new scandal in the newspapers they have no time to go abroad. On the day when there are four or five columns of delightful private letters published in a divorce case she stays at home and reads and reads and reads. No time for her Bible that day, but toward night, perhaps, she may find time to run out a little while and see whether there are any new developments.

Satan does not have to keep a very sharp lookout for his evil dominion in that neighborhood. He has let out to her the whole contract. She gets husbands and wives into a quarrel and brothers and sisters into antagonism, and she disunites the pastor with the flock and the flock with the pastor, and she makes neighbors who before were kindly disposed toward each other over-suspicious and critical, so when one of the neighbors passes by in a carriage they hiss through their teeth and say: "Ah, we could all keep carriages if we never paid our debts!"

When two or three whisperers get together they stir a caldron of trouble, which makes me think of the three witches of "Macbeth" dancing around a boiling caldron in a dark cave:

Double, double, toil and trouble,
Fire burn and caldron bubble,
Fillet of a fenny snake,
In the caldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt and toe of frog,
Wool of bat and tongue of dog,
Adder's fork and blind worm's sting,
Lizard's leg and owl's wing,
For a charm of powerful trouble,
Like a hell-bell boil and bubble,
Double, double, toil and trouble,
Fire burn and caldron bubble,
Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witch's mummy, maw and gulf,
Of the rarest and the rarest kind,
Made with great toil and pain;
Add thereto a tiger's chauldron,
For the ingredients of our caldron,
Double, double, toil and trouble,
Fire burn and caldron bubble;
Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

I would only change Shakespeare in this, that where he puts the word "witch" I should put the word "whisperer." Ah, what a caldron! Did you ever get a taste of it? I have more respect for the poor wail of the street that goes down under the gaslight with no home and no God—for she deceives no one as to what she is—than I have for these bags of respectable society who cover up their tiger claws with a fine shawl and bolt the hell of their heart with a diamond breastpin.

The work of masculine whisperers is chiefly seen in the embarrassment of business. Now, I suppose there are hundreds of men here who at some time have been in business trouble. I will undertake to say that in nine cases out of ten it was the result of some whisperer's work. The whisperer uttered some suspicion in regard to your credit. You sold your horse and carriage because you had no use for them, and the whisperer said: "Sold his horse and carriage because he had to sell them. The fact that he sold his horse and carriage shows he is going down in business."

One of your friends gets embarrassed, and you are a little involved with him. The whisperer says: "I wonder if he can stand under all this pressure? I think he is going down. I think he will have to give up." You borrow money out of a bank, and the director whispers outside about it, and after awhile the suspicion gets fairly started, and it leaps from one whisperer's lips to another whisperer's lips until all the people you owe want their money and want it right away, and the business circles come around you like a pack of wolves, and, though you had assets four times more than were necessary to meet your liabilities, crash went everything. Whisperers! Oh, how much business men have suffered!

Sometimes in the circles of clergymen we discuss why it is that a great many merchants do not go to church. I will tell you why they do not go to church. By the time Saturday night comes they are worn out with the annoyances of business life. They have had enough meanness practical upon them to set their whole nervous system a-twitch.

I think among the worst of the whisperers are those who gather up all the harsh things that have been said about you and bring them to you—all the things said against you, or against your family, or against your style of business. They gather them all up, and they bring them to you; they bring them to you in the very worst shape; they bring them to you without any of the extenuating circumstances, and after they have made your feelings all raw, very raw, they take this brine, this turpentine, this aqua fortis, and rub it in with a coarse towel, and rub it in until it sinks to the bone. They make you the pincushion in which they thrust all the sharp things they have ever heard about you. "Now, don't bring me into the scrape. Now, don't tell anybody I told you. Let it be between you and me. Don't involve me in it at all." They aggravate you to the point of profanity, and then they wonder you cannot sing psalm tunes! They turn you on a spit before a hot fire and wonder

why you are not absorbed in gratitudes to them because they turn you on a spit. Peddlers of night shade! Peddlers of Canada thistle! Peddlers of nuxvomica! Sometimes they get you in a corner where you cannot very well escape without being rude, and then they tell you all about this one, and all about that one, and all about the other one, and they talk, talk, talk, talk, talk. After awhile they go away, leaving the place looking like a barnyard after the foxes and the weasels have been around here a wing, and there a claw, and yonder an eye, and there a crop. How they do make the feathers fly!

Rather than the defamation of good names it seems to me it would be almost as honorable and useful if you just took a box of matches in your pocket and a razor in your hand and go through the streets and see how many houses you can burn down and how many throats you can cut. That is not a much worse business. The destruction of a man's name is worse than the destruction of his life. A woman came in confession to a priest and told him that she had been slandering her neighbors. The priest promised her absolution on condition of her performing a penance. He gave her a thistle top and said: "You can take that thistle and scatter the seeds all over the field." She went and did so and came back. "Now," said the priest, "gather up all those seeds." She said: "I can't." "Ah," he said, "I know you can't. Neither can you gather up the evil words you spoke about your neighbors." All good men and all good women have sometimes had detractors after them. John Wesley's wife whispered about him, whispered all over England, kept on whispering about that good man—as good a man as ever lived—and kept on whispering until the connubial relation was dissolved.

Jesus Christ had these whisperers after Him, and they charged Him with drinking too much and keeping bad company. "A wine bibber and the friend of publicans and sinners." You take the best man that ever lived and put a detective on his track for ten years, watching where he goes and when he comes and with a determination to misconstrue everything and to think he goes here for a bad purpose and there for a bad purpose, with that determination of destroying him, at the end of the ten years he will be held despicable in the sight of a great many people.

If it is an outrageous thing to despoil a man's character, how much worse is it to damage a woman's reputation? Yet that evil grows from century to century, and it is all done by whisperers. A suspicion is started. The next whisperer who gets hold of it states the suspicion as a proven fact, and many a good woman, as honorable as your wife or your mother, has been whispered out of all kindly associations, and whispered into the grave. Some people say there is no hell, but if there be no hell for such a despoiler of womanly character, let high time that some philanthropist build one! But there is such a place established, and what a time they will have when all the whisperers get down there together rehearsing things! Everlasting carnival of mud. Were I not for the uncomfortable surrounding you might suppose they would be glad to get there. In that region where they are all bad what opportunities for exploitation by these whisperers. On earth, to despoil their neighbors some times they had to lie about them, but down there they can say the worst things possible about their neighbors and tell the truth. Jubilee of whisperers. Semihaven of scandal mongers stopping their gabbles about their diabolical neighbors only long enough to go up to the iron gate and ask some newcomer from the earth: "What is the last gossip in the city on earth where we used to live?"

Now, how are we to war against this iniquity which curses every community on earth? First, by refusing to listen to or believe a whisper. Every court of the land has for a law and all decent communities have for a law that they must hold people innocent until they are proved guilty. There is only one person worse than the whisperer, and that is the man or woman who listens without protest. The trouble is, you hold the sack while they fill it. The receiver of the stolen goods is just as bad as the thief. An ancient writer declares that a slanderer and a man who receives the slander ought both to be hanged—the one by the tongue and the other by the ear—and I agree with him.

When you hear something bad about your neighbors, do not go all over and ask about it, whether it is true, and scatter it and spread it. You might as well go to a smallpox hospital and take a patient and carry him all through the community, asking people if they really thought it a case of smallpox. That would be very bad for the patient and for all the neighbors. Do not retail slanders and whisperings. Do not make yourself the inspector of wars, and the supervisor of carbuncles, and the commissioner for street gutters, and the holder of stakes for a dog fight. Can it be that you, an immortal man; that you, an immortal woman, can find no better business than to become a gutter inspector?

Beside that, at your family table allow no detraction. Teach your children to speak well of others. Show them the difference between a bee and a wasp—the one gathering honey, the other thrusting a sting. I read of a family where they kept what they called "A Slander Book," and when any slanderous words were uttered in the house about anybody or detraction uttered it was all put down in this book. The few weeks there were a great many entries, but after awhile there were no entries at all. Detraction stopped in that household. It would be a good thing to have a slander book in all households.

Heaven punishes the bad and proves the best.—Dryden.

TRUTHS BLUNTLY TOLD.

Senator Hanna's Civil Service Views Repudiated by Honest Republicans.

The New York Press, which is uncompromisingly republican and therefore not chargeable with political prejudice in its comments, takes exceptions to the recent expressions by Senator Hanna regarding the changes in civil service exemption and says he "will not find himself in accord with independent and republican sentiment."

The Press admits that the "step backward" might be made use of as an aid to securing a presidential nomination, the politicians' viewpoint being unanimous on the question. But, it declares, "those who are interested in the republican party from other viewpoints than the politicians' regard the getting of votes for the polls to elect candidates as of minor importance to the party and country than getting delegates to vote a convention to nominate candidates, and while the 'step backward' can be made to get delegates, it can hardly be made to serve any other purpose than to lose votes at the polls."

This New York republican paper truthfully says that the American voters are supporters of the civil service principles, and it claims that because of its championship of these principles the republican party has gained the confidence and aid of thousands of voters who otherwise were not in the strongest sympathy with that party. It takes this "step backward," then, as an invite believers in a better civil service to look elsewhere than to the present executive for what they seek.

The "practical politics" argument, according to the contention of the New York Press, might have a leg to stand in if the "practical politicians" believed that it was absolutely necessary to re-nominate McKinley, and that the only possible way to secure that re-nomination was by the civil service "step backward." But the "practical politicians" think it is a foregone conclusion that it will be re-nominated. To achieve the purpose of "practical politics," says the republican paper, "it was not necessary to backslide on the civil service question and sacrifice the votes of civil service men."

There is sound sense in this, and it is recommended to the careful consideration of the delegates to the Ohio republican state convention who so heartily commended the president for his "judicious modifications of the civil service rules recently promulgated." The New York republican paper is doubtless right when it says "the party must suffer more or less now, and a great deal more later, when, more pressing questions having been disposed of, we are called upon for a reckoning of the 'step backward.'"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

THE PHILIPPINE SITUATION.

"Benevolent Assimilation" for Successful Conquest, But Guerrilla War.

Although the war in the Philippines is Mr. McKinley's own—congress never having declared it—the American people are fighting and paying for it. They are therefore entitled to full and trustworthy information concerning it. A double censorship, at Manila and at Washington, keeps this information from the people. But these facts are not denied:

1. The war has now lasted for 129 days, or 25 days longer than our war with Spain. We hold, after this period, less of the territory than Spain occupied and less than we held in August of last year. The rebel forces are now more "troublesome" than at any former time.

2. The war has cost nearly 700 men killed, 6,500 wounded, 10,000 invalidated. It has cost \$63,000,000 in money, and is costing nearly \$300,000 a day. Our losses in the fighting in Cuba which resulted in the surrender of Santiago and the end of the war with Spain were about 230 killed and 1,500 wounded. Our losses in Porto Rico were three killed and 40 wounded.

3. There have been sent to Gen. Otis 25,000 men. Some 4,500 more are under sailing orders. The president has decided, it is said, quietly to enlist the 25,000 volunteers he was authorized by congress to add to the army for temporary use.

4. According to the best expert testimony it will take from 100,000 to 150,000 troops to subdue the Filipinos and hold the principal points in the islands.

5. The rainy season will soon put an end to campaigning. "Fifty per cent. of our men will be incapacitated by sickness and the territory overrun will have to be abandoned; Manila will be in a state of siege again." This is the testimony of Dr. McQueston, late of Gen. Otis' staff and health officer of Manila.

6. The president's peace commission is a total failure, owing largely to its inability to consider any terms except unconditional surrender and absolute submission to the "sovereignty of the United States."

This is not a pleasing picture. It is neither "benevolent assimilation" nor successful conquest. It has all the appearance of a foolish and futile and endless guerrilla war. If Mr. McKinley can "crush the insurrection by an overwhelming force," as his supporters are urging him to do, it is manifestly the part of wisdom for him to do so. There is neither honor nor profit in permitting this unnecessary and un-American war to drag on into another year.—N. Y. World.

The censorship over the telegraph lines at Manila is one of the developments of our new imperial form of government which is particularly significant. A careful scrutiny of all mail and telegraph matter going to the Philippines is entirely proper, and as our navy occupies the coast and our forces have the cables in their possession it can easily be maintained. But why is the out-bound matter so ruthlessly cut to pieces?—Pittsburgh Post.

DRUMMERS DISCHARGED.

Workers for McKinley in 1896 Who Are Now Without Occupation.

McKinley was elected president in 1896 through the influence of the money power.

Trusts poured out the money necessary to buy votes to the extent of at least \$4,000,000, as admitted by republican leaders, and it is believed by intelligent democrats that five times that sum was expended.

One of the leading features of the campaign was the efforts of the army of commercial travelers, known colloquially as drummers, to secure ballots for McKinley, the alleged advance agent of prosperity. What reward has been given to this army of drummers for services rendered?

The answer to this question may be found in the testimony before the industrial commission of P. E. Dove, president of the Commercial Travelers' association. The figures he submitted show that the organization of the trusts had resulted in throwing 35,000 salesmen out of employment and in reducing the salaries of 25,000 more. President Dove estimated that the annual loss to the salesmen on account of loss of employment and reductions aggregated \$60,000,000; to the hotels, \$28,000,000, and to the railroads, \$27,000,000, because of the loss of patronage.

Perhaps the commercial travelers may now regret their display of zeal in behalf of a man whose election has caused loss of employment in many cases and reduction of salaries in most cases.

In making his statement, the witness said: "The great tobacco combine threw out about 3,000 salesmen; the Continental Tobacco company telegraphed the discharge of 250 in one day; the Baking Powder trust has dispensed with all excepting half a dozen men. I know of two salesmen discharged by the trust who were formerly in the employ of the Cleveland Baking Powder company, one receiving a salary of \$5,000 a year, the other \$4,500. Their routes, with those of other discharged salesmen, are covered by one agent at \$15 a week."

In 1896 the drummers had to work for McKinley under duress and in fear of losing their situations. Now a large percent. of them have been discharged regardless of what they did. They will be heard from in 1899.—Chicago Democrat.

REAPING THE WHIRLWIND.

Republican Protection Has Brought Forth Its Legitimate Fruits.

Havemeyer's statement that the republican tariff is the mother of trusts is not new, but it is true—undeniably true. Protection is an sure-bred of the trust evil as is fifth the begotten of disease.

One republican organ which has of late been denouncing trusts in a Pickwickian sense said recently that behind the democratic outcry against trusts was the concealed motive to destroy the principle of protection in our revenue laws. The democrats have never made any concealment about the matter. They have always from the beginning of their party history opposed class legislation, and the principle of protection embodies the most flagrant form of class legislation. They have always opposed a protective tariff because that is the most pronounced form of legalized robbery.

When the republican party went before the country advocating a policy which takes from the earnings of the many tribute for the pockets of the few, it planted in our public morals the false tent that it is proper to force the consumer to pay the manufacturer a price beyond that derivable from competitive profit solely to reward him for being in the manufacturing business.

The republican party planted the wind of protection and the country is reaping the whirlwind of trusts.

Mr. Havemeyer argued logically when he took the ground that the cure of the trust evil cannot be effected without removing its cause. The democracy proposes, if intrusted with power, to eliminate the protection feature from our laws and place the tariff on a purely revenue basis. While doing this it will attack trusts with every form of remedial legislation derivable from the federal and state functions of government.—St. Louis Republic.

POINTS AND OPINIONS.

—When the president has time he will oblige a good many people by explaining why he delayed overhauling the civil service so long if the country was suffering under its rules.—Kansas City Times.

—Mark Twain should hurry home and hustle if he wants to retain his position as the great American humorist. Some republican wrote an anti-trunk plank for the Ohio platform.—Omaha World-Herald.

—Having observed the satisfactory and beneficent influence of the spoils system in army management and operation, President McKinley considered it his solemn duty to begin the breaking down of the entire merit system.—Detroit Free Press.

—Mr. Depew makes a center shot when he declares that trusts centralize the control of wealth. That, of necessity, must raise prices, reduce wages and promote idleness. His declaration that there is at present a contrary effect will not be commonly accepted. Both Mr. Hanna and Mr. Depew are apologetic and explanatory in their treatment of the trust subject. Their pleas are in avoidance. Mr. Depew has furnished a conclusive reason why trusts will be a fighting issue this year and next year. He has been frank enough to express the great danger to the people—the raising of prices and the lowering of wages.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

PUNGENT PARAGRAPHS.

The Courtesy of the Game.—"To what may I attribute the honor of this call?" "A pair of aces."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

"What made you play that piece over again? I didn't call that applause an encore." "Why, the music was marked 'Repeat.'"—Philadelphia Bulletin.

Not a Party.—Ada—"Wasn't there some talk of Maude marrying a duke?" Dolly—"Yes; but you see the duke didn't say anything about it."—Philadelphia North American.

Cold Blooded.—"Is it true, darling, that you gave the minister \$50 for marrying us?" "Yes, but keep it to yourself. I was never so awfully in my life."—Detroit Free Press.

A Horn Fighter.—Johnson—"Mormon Jake would rather fight than eat, I do believe." Bill—"Fardner, that ain't half of it. He'd druther fight than drink."—Indianapolis Journal.

Youthful Lover (sighing).—"It is not good for man to live alone." The Lady—"Very true, and that's why it would be so much better for you to go and live with your mamma."—Fleegende Blaetter.

"Say, Bill, Joe just asked the boss if he could get off to attend his brother's funeral, an' the boss says: 'Are you sure it ain't a ball game?' 'Well, sir,' says Joe, 'it's a kind of a combination—me brother's the umpire.'"—Scrivener's.

Fudgy.—"Remarkable cure, that case of Mrs. Blank's." Fudgy—"Haven't heard about it. What was it?" Fudgy—"She has recovered, her voice. You know she hasn't been able to speak for three years. They induced her to play a game of whist, and she was talking before she knew it."—Boston Transcript.

LIGHTNING STRUCK TWICE.

Giant Cottonwood Tree in Hyde Park, Chicago, Succumbed to a Second Stroke.

Lightning never strikes twice in the same spot, says an old saw, but there is a giant cottonwood in Hyde Park that proves that there are exceptions to all rules.

This tree stands on the south side of Fifty-third street between Cornell avenue and the Illinois Central tracks. It is more than 40 years old and is one of the tree monarchs of the neighborhood. The late Judge John A. Jameson built his home at the southwest corner of Fifty-third street and Cornell avenue in 1857. There was little or nothing in Hyde Park in those days, so little that the suburban service of the Illinois Central was only one year old, and there were only three trains a day each way. On the Fifty-third street side he planted a row of cottonwoods. Cottonwoods grow rapidly and take kindly to the sandy soil along the lake shore. The row grew into great trees, which in time came to be landmarks. Ten years ago the largest of these great cottonwoods was struck by lightning. The bolt seemed to be in the shape of an enormous knife, for it sliced off a large strip of the trunk for 75 feet or more. Such a stroke would have killed a less vigorous tree. But the big cottonwood tree stood the blow bravely, recovered and went on growing. In time there was nothing but a long brown scar to prove the visitation of the deadly blast from the skies.

A few days ago the lightning came again. Before the bolt struck the leaves of the cottonwood were green and glossy. Within an hour every leaf was shriveled. Some of the leaves dried up and became brown. Every sign of vitality had departed from the tree. The giant cottonwood was dead.

Curiously enough, this time the bolt left no mark. Ten years ago the lightning left a great wound in the trunk; yet the tree lived. This time there was no sign of the smallest puncture; yet the tree was instantly killed.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

Natural Gas Wells Run Dry.

Ten years ago the daily capacity of the natural gas wells in the Findlay (O.) fields was 200,000,000 feet. Now it is down to a few million feet, and the pressure is so low that the supply is almost useless. This year will mark the passing of natural gas as a fuel in all of northwestern Ohio. The big pipe lines which carried gas to Toledo, Tiffin, Sandusky, Norwalk and many smaller places are fast being abandoned and the pipes taken up. The pump stations of the Northwestern Natural Gas company are shut down, as are those of the city of Toledo, which cost the municipality \$1,500,000. The gas would have lasted many years longer if in the early years of its discovery it had not been wasted. The famous Krag well, probably the greatest gas producer ever opened up, was allowed to burn uncontrolled for months at a time, millions of feet going to waste daily. All through the natural gas belt, in the early days of the craze, the streets were lit by great torches, the flames from which sometimes flared up 30 feet into the air.—Chicago Tribune.

Too Convenient.

"Here's a queer tale from Tennessee of a family of 11 that has its home in a hollow tree," said the woman who is always interested in strange stories as she looked up from her paper.

"How would you like such a home as that, Willie?" inquired the woman's husband, turning to his son and heir.

The boy shook his head.

"Too easy to get hold of a switch," he answered, as his mind reverted to some of the little controversies he had had with his father.—Chicago Post.

A Taste for the Ribbon.

"Jimmie," inquired the neighbor boy through the fence, "what club is your maw's just joined?" "I heard her askin' my maw to join, too."

"I don't know, but from the way she's makin' me and the servants work I think it must be a drivin' club."—Detroit Free Press.